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DEPUTIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Burma

Wednesday
28 September 2016

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28 September 2016

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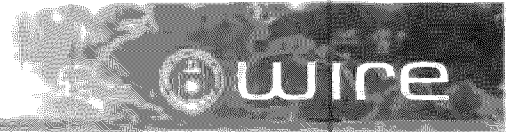
citizenship, not full citizenship. Naturalized citizens are restricted from some professions (e.g., law, medicine), cannot obtain a university degree, and cannot run for government office.

ASSK has pledged support for humanitarian access, including health and education, to camps for internally displaced persons. In late August, Burma announced the formation of an Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, chaired by former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, to help the government and international donors work together to improve the situation and resolve sensitive issues in Rakhine State. ASSK took considerable political risk to allow international members on a commission that will ultimately need to address sensitive matters in Burma.

Peace Process. Putting an end to the nearly 70 years of civil conflict and achieving lasting peace between the Bamar majority population and a multitude of ethnic armed groups is the defining challenge of Burma. Although the conclusion of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement with eight ethnic armed groups in October 2015 was a significant achievement, there are many ethnic armed groups – including some of the most powerful groups – that did not sign. Most ethnic armed groups that did not sign have said that they might be willing to sign the agreement, pending further negotiations with the government and military. ASSK has prioritized the peace process in her first 5 months in office and launched formally on August 31 a nationwide peace conference, the 21st Century Panglong Conference, named after the 1947 national unity conference that her father initiated but was unable to conclude before his assassination. To overcome continued disagreement among the military, government, and ethnic armed groups, the Panglong peace conference avoided substantive debate and instead focused on symbolism, highlighting the more inclusive participation than the previous administration's peace efforts. Participants were cautiously upbeat following the conference and highlighted the significance of all the stakeholders in Burma's civil war gathering for the first time since independence to share their views through dialogue, which was broadcast nationwide on public television. Still, this is only the beginning of a long peace process. The new government is faced with the dilemma of needing to negotiate with the military, which has maintained a hardline position on peace talks, as well as with a range of ethnic armed groups, which are motivated by a diverse set of views and interests. While the military appears to be supportive of the government's peace plans, discordant rhetoric from the Commander in Chief during the peace conference and continued military action against non-signatory ethnic armed groups undermine trust that the civilian government can control the military and negotiate on behalf of the government. Another major challenge to peace has been a number of Chinese-backed groups who are involved in ongoing conflicts with the military and illicit activities.

(If Raised) U.N. General Assembly Third Committee Resolution on Human Rights. For the last 2 decades, the U.N. General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Issues) has adopted an annual resolution on the human rights situation in Burma. These resolutions generally specify international concerns about rights violations, particularly the continued persecution of the Rohingya. ASSK has asked the United States and other countries not to support such a resolution this year, arguing that Burma should not be lumped together with the other countries (Iran, North Korea, and Syria) on which the General Assembly adopts country-specific human rights resolutions, particularly after the achievements in Burma's democratic transition over the past year. We are still consulting internally and with like-minded countries about whether we should grant ASSK's request not to support such a resolution this year.

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(b)(3) [REDACTED] **Burma: Armed Ethnic Groups' Divisions Likely To Impede Peace Process**

(b)(3) [REDACTED] **Summary:** Burma's armed ethnic groups probably will be ill prepared for discussions with the government and military at the "21st Century Panglong" peace conference scheduled to begin on 31 August, given lingering divisions among armed ethnic groups and uncertainty about who will participate. Eighteen armed ethnic groups met in late July to craft a common negotiating position for Panglong, but they remain divided on a common vision for Burma's future, including proposals to redraw state lines and to grant autonomy to state legislatures. [REDACTED] (b)(1) (b)(3)

[REDACTED] State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi has made a peace process that includes all armed ethnic groups a priority, but the government's position on whether groups must sign the Nationwide Cease-fire Agreement (NCA) before participating in peace talks is unclear. The United Nationalities Federation Council, a coalition of many of the groups that have not signed the cease-fire, publicly pledged to maintain its policy of not signing the cease-fire until all groups are invited to do so.

(b)(3) [REDACTED] This is a stand-alone graphic.

(b)(3) [REDACTED] For additional information, please see the WIRe, [REDACTED] Burma: New Administration Making Peace Conference a Priority, 19 July 2016.

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Burma: Armed Ethnic Groups' Divisions Likely To Impede Peace Process

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Burma's armed ethnic groups probably will be ill prepared for discussions with the government and military at the "21st Century Panglong" peace conference scheduled to begin on 31 August, given lingering divisions among armed ethnic groups and uncertainty about who will participate. Eighteen armed ethnic groups met in late July to craft a common negotiating position for Panglong, but they remain divided on a common vision for Burma's future, including proposals to redraw state boundaries and to grant autonomy to state legislatures.

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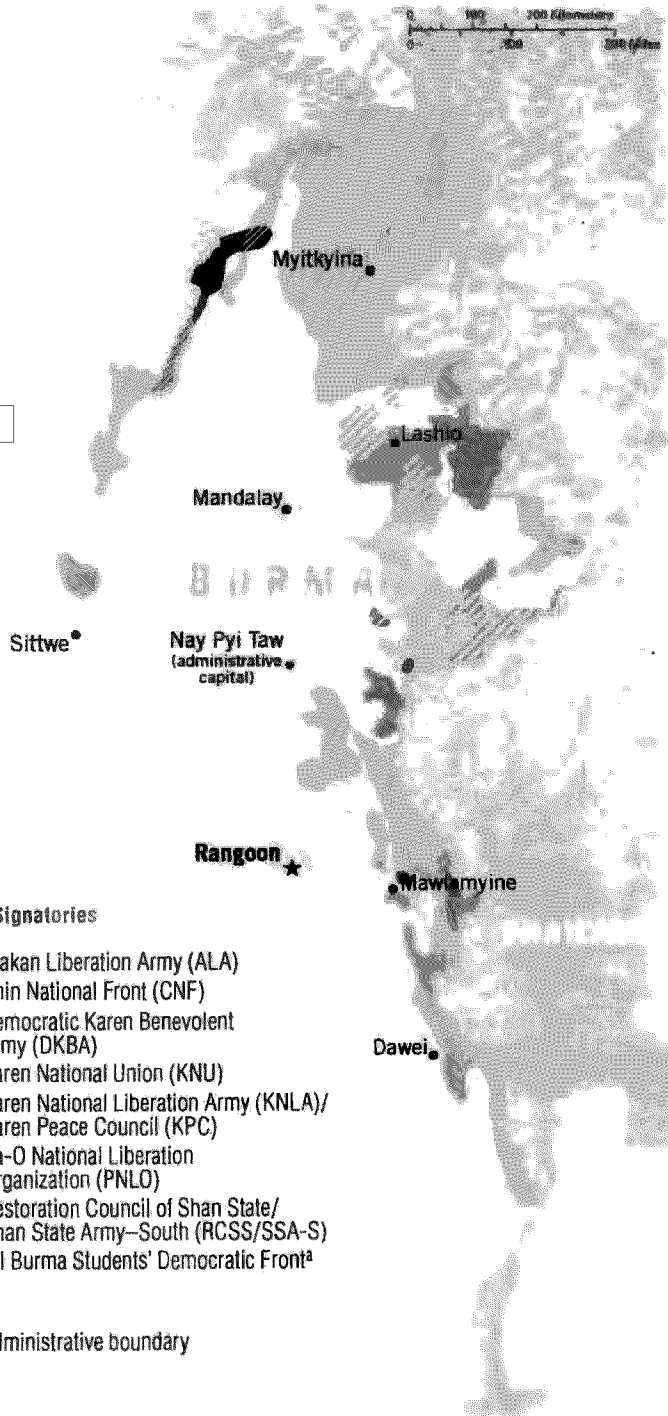
NCA Non-Signatories

- Kachin Independence Army (KIA)
- Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)
- Kuki National Organization—Burma
- Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA)
- National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA or Mongla)
- National Socialist Council of Nagaland—Khaplang (NSCN-K)
- New Mon State Party (NMSP)
- Shan State Progressive Party/ Shan State Army—North (SSPP/SSA-N)
- Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA)
- United Wa State Army (UWSA)
- Arakan Army^a
- Arakan National Council^a
- Lahu Democratic Union^a
- Shan-Ni Nationalities Army^a

NCA Signatories

- Arakan Liberation Army (ALA)
- Chin National Front (CNF)
- Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA)
- Karen National Union (KNU)
- Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)/ Karen Peace Council (KPC)
- Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO)
- Restoration Council of Shan State/ Shan State Army—South (RCSS/SSA-S)
- All Burma Students' Democratic Front^a

Administrative boundary



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